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THE BLAST

An anarchist agitational from Turtle Island

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Destroy the Citizen inside Your Head

From nearly every political voice, mainstream to marginal, we are being told that this presidential election ought to matter to us, that it is somehow distinctive. A sober gaze reveals this election's only distinctiveness is in how pointedly it reminds us that the political class and their donors are not a monolithic entity, but instead a loose grouping of individuals, each with their own particular agendas, narrow fields of vision, and frenzies and delusions. We do well by ourselves when we remember that no one is really in charge of our Ship of Fools. Nonetheless, every four years, many radicals succumb to valorizing the election; some even urge voting.

The most familiar canard is that the present is an exception: whatever its faults, voting must be done this one time because this particular election really will make a difference. Election ideology thus reveals itself as the religion of the amnesiac, conditioned through the repetitive manufacture of pseudo-crisis. Four years ago, it was We Need to Protect Abortion Rights; before that, Obama Will Bring Change; before that, Bush Must Be Defeated... History shows its propensity for rhyming, as we are now sold the twin lies of Bernie Will Bring Change and Trump Must Be Defeated.



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Nearly always wed to this first lie is that politic of despair, that the Democratic Party should be seen as very slightly preferable to anarchists, who are here implicitly recast as ultraliberals. This suggestion that the perpetually abused ought to cling to the more gentle of their dominators is not simply humiliating and recuperative, but also ahistorical. In these last seven years, we have witnessed not only more of the same, but much that is worse: a flourishing of Executive Orders, out-



the above, US elections are in practice a complete embarrassment for such a true believer. It is common knowledge that elections are overdetermined before the fact by the ability of private

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More nauseating are those anarchists who actually believe, at least theoretically, in democracy. That democracy – the passage of authority from the largely external and visible to the largely internal and invisible – has come to be widely seen as an inspiring achievement of human freedom is a miracle of humanist ideology. But that democracy could come to be associated with anarchism is a transubstantiation, as the catechism says, “in a way surpassing understanding.”

When one votes, one’s power is precisely nothing – except in the case that one’s vote is literally the singular deciding vote, ie if there would otherwise have been no majority, supermajority, or plurality. When such an event does occur, the result is not a triumph of human freedom and cooperation, but is effectively identical with monarchy by chance: the deciding voter is the unlikely and unwitting dictator. In every other case, frankly examined without its ideological varnish, democracy is a moral valorization of mob rule, complete with its majoritarian tyranny. In democratic republicanism – democracy tempered by representation, that is (in official narrative), our system – democracy becomes mediated and bureaucratized, opening the door to informal oligarchy via cronyism and graft.

Even if one were to deny or downplay all of

the above, US elections are in practice a complete embarrassment for such a true believer. It is common knowledge that elections are overdetermined before the fact by the ability of private wealth to dominate the campaign finance system. There is the additional matter of the machinery of both parties tactically disenfranchising one another’s constituencies: in 2012, 4.3 million votes were never counted and 4.8 million legally qualified voters were barred from voting; as a journalist put it “Election theft for profit has become as American as apple pie and Apple apps.”

Democracy thus reveals itself as broken in theory and laughable in practice. To vote is to lose before the result: it is to concede that individuality must always be squelched, that genuine cooperation is impossible, that substantive action must always be mediated, that only reified value has import.

A final familiar lie is one that more or less acknowledges the *reductio ad absurdum* briefly touched on above, but, psychotically, insists the time spent voting is nonetheless better than whatever else one might do with their time. Our modern lives are indeed impoverished, but they are really not that impoverished. In this country, the State itself implicitly affirms the humiliation inherent in the act of voting by making it take hours in many cases. But, for sake of example, let us imagine that it would take only an hour or two – in that time, you could instead:

1. Execute a direct action with people you trust.
2. Spend time building trust with friends.
3. Create, circulate, read, or respond to anarchist media.

4. Go to a beautiful place and enjoy being alive.
5. Have sex with someone you love. Self-love is love.
6. Challenge yourself to learn a new skill or creative activity.
7. Cook and share a dinner with friends while talking about what new projects you might pursue.
8. Take measures to have higher self- and group-level sufficiency and be less dependent on civilization.
9. Scrutinize the ways ideology determines your thinking and activity and how you might change those habits.
10. Convince someone else not to vote.

The country we inhabit has quite successfully sublimated authority. Our neoliberal cybernetic democratic republic expresses power through brute repression only when necessary – excesses are costly for it. Much of the time, it is permissive – it realizes and reproduces itself through the docility and self-policing of the majority of its subjects, encouraged by the allowance and exaltation of various pseudo-freedoms: the freedom of choosing, within severe but obfuscated limits, where to work, what to buy, how to spend leisure time, and – for whom to vote.

This essay is far too short to allow for an exhaustive critique of democracy, but many exist: see “Debunking Democracy” by Bob Black, “They oblige us...” in *To Our Friends* by the Invisible Committee...

Welcome to The Blast

Welcome to the first issue of *The Blast* — an agitational periodical from Turtle Island.

Our task for this paper is daunting. We intend to reach people who are otherwise unfamiliar with anarchist politics and also to provide a different perspective for readers already familiar with radical politics. For those new to the politics we present some of the rich stories of what has happened before us, stories of our gains and losses, of what is possible in the future and in our daily lives today. For those already here we'd like to create a respectful but critical atmosphere with no (or at least shifting) sacred cows.

This project will have two forms. The main one is this newspaper, which will come out in volume at least two times a year (we will be starting with 10,000 copies), and that will serve the functions already described. We also will have an active online presence, one that will emphasize serving people who are new to these ideas, and focusing on education, issues of the day, and clear writing. Our site will have a strong editorial focus, polite forums to discuss action and ideas, and a transparent set of policies around privacy, security, and content.

We will also make a serious effort to offer new, mostly translated, content in Spanish. We believe a principle of anarchist practice is engaged internationalism, which means that, even though most of us do not speak Spanish we will reach across the boundaries between us and our Hispanophone friends.

In our first issue we offer two historical pieces, one on the history of the San Francisco publication *The Blast* and its editor Alexander Berkman, and the other a historical piece on the Preparedness Day Bombing and its parallels to today. We have a interview with IWW organizers from Minneapolis on Black Lives Matter (and the anarchist critique of it), an essay on the relevance of the ongoing revolution in Kurdistan (The so-called Rojava Revolution) and introductions to three on-going columns. Finally we have a fun and games page featuring recipes and a crossword puzzle.

(We'd also like to acknowledge the amazing art work of Robert Minor, who is detoured on our front page. His art made the original *Blast* stand out beautifully.)

Destroy the Old and the False—a History of The Blast

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Destroy the Old and the False—a History of The Blast

This newspaper is called *The Blast* as an homage to the short-lived San Francisco paper of the same name that came out in 1916-1917. Here we discuss the context of that paper and how it inspires us today. A large part of that context involves the editor of the original, Alexander Berkman, one of the most important anarchists of his time. Berkman, known to his friends as Sasha, immigrated to the United States in 1888, landing in New York City where he immediately joined the anarchist movement and met the woman who would become his lifelong friend and lover, Emma Goldman. Berkman spent his anarchist life as a writer, teacher, printer, and editor.

Attentat

One of the things that Berkman is best known for was his reaction to the Homestead Strike, a huge event of the time. The Carnegie Steel Company lost a strike against the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers in 1882. After the loss, the destruction of that union became an obsession for Andrew Carnegie's hired hand Henry Frick. Ten years later, June 29th of 1892, workers were locked out of the Homestead Steel Works and on July 6th, 1892, the Company attempted to move in scab workers by ferry. A day-long battle with guns, cannon, and dynamite en-

er *Earth*, a publication important to anarchists and radicals today because of the many causes it championed (birth control, for example, a topic that people were imprisoned merely for discussing) and giving voice to many significant thinkers and writers who continue to be influential, including Voltairine de Cleyre, Francisco Ferrer, Margaret Anderson, and Ricardo Flores Magón, among many others. On April 20th, 1914, the Colorado National Guard brutally opened fire on a tent city that had been built to support the striking coal miners of Ludlow. Twenty six were killed (eleven of them children). This inspired Berkman to leave *Mother Earth* and New York to do what he could to support the social war. Eventually he landed in San Francisco and launched *The Blast*, which was heralded as "...the great work calling to be done. To work then, and blasted be every obstacle in the way of the Regeneration."

Barely six months later an explosive was set off in San Francisco as an intervention against the American build-up to entry in the First World War (the Preparedness Day bombing). This suitcase bomb killed ten and injured forty, and was one of several actions sparking intense official repression of anarchists—especially in immigrant communities. Eventually Sasha and Emma were rounded up as a result of the Anarchist Exclusion Act and deported to Russia, along with

he spent the rest of his days in relative peace. The most notable task he completed during this period is the excellent statement of purpose *What Is Communist Anarchism?*, which still stands as an excellent introduction to anarchist ideas. His thought and influence remain an indelible part of the history of anarchism in the US and an inspiration for the generations of anarchists who have come after.

What is this new The Blast?

In the spirit of Berkman, our goal is as simple and complicated as his statement: "to destroy the Old and the False is the most vital work." What makes this more complicated is that a hundred years after the original was published, the work has even more layers to get through. The masters of capital and governance are still everywhere and evident but their lackeys in the media, academy, and armed forces (especially the police) are more powerful and sophisticated than ever.

Our project then is to turn the negative project of abject hostility toward the existing order into the positive project of how to do our work without losing goodwill. This means that while sensational attacks may be applauded they mostly cannot be seen as effective. It means that the

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On reading the headlines about this conflict, Alexander and Emma saw an opportunity for intervention. By the principle of propaganda by the deed, they decided that the high-profile murder of Frick, Carnegie's thug and President of the Homestead mill, would demonstrate to the working class that anarchism was not only just but also effective against the ruling order, and hoped that they would be inspired to general revolt. Sadly Berkman's spirit was stronger than his aim and Frick survived Berkman's many bullets and stab attempts. Berkman spent the next fourteen years in prison, where he wrote one of the strongest anarchist prison memoirs (*Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist*) and a prison newspaper (*Prison Blossoms*).

After his release in 1906, Berkman spent the next eight years as editor of Emma's paper *Moth-*

er, and getting out of the country. Berkman and writers who continue to be influential, including Voltairine de Cleyre, Francisco Ferrer, Margaret Anderson, and Ricardo Flores Magón, among many others. On April 20th, 1914, the Colorado National Guard brutally opened fire on a tent city that had been built to support the striking coal miners of Ludlow. Twenty six were killed (eleven of them children). This inspired Berkman to leave *Mother Earth* and New York to do what he could to support the social war. Eventually he landed in San Francisco and launched *The Blast*, which was heralded as "...the great work calling to be done. To work then, and blasted be every obstacle in the way of the Regeneration."

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Russia and End of Life

Emma and Sasha entered the Soviet Union during the time of the great counter-revolution. Workers were being oppressed under War Communism and civil liberties were greatly curtailed (as "threats to the revolution"). As enemies of the US, their access to the leaders of the Bolshevik party allowed them to see the mismanagement and corruption of the counter-revolution before it became obvious to others. After seeing a strike suppressed and the gruesome details of the Kronstadt massacre Goldman and Berkman fled to Berlin. The resulting books, *My Disillusionment in Russia* and *The Bolshevik Myth*, clearly made the case that the Soviet revolution was no anarchist one.

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Our project then is to turn the negative project of abject hostility toward the existing order into the positive project of how to do our work without losing goodwill. This means that while sensational attacks may be applauded they mostly cannot be seen as effective. It means that the working class has to be understood in the context of being successfully self-marginalized. It means that disenfranchised people aren't necessarily natural allies (although they should be) but victims of the same order of illusion and brutality as the rest of us. Our goal is to make these confusions clear through crisp language and an anarchist sensibility rooted in place, context, and the unstoppable desire to attack what attacks us.

The anarchist politics of the original publication came out of (among other things) comradeship and shared experiences by huge, suffering, idealistic, and energetic populations of immigrants, a comradeship that we no longer have, for good and for ill. We hope that this iteration of the newspaper will find and expose new bases for action and relationships that are just as strong.

When San Francisco's Future was Anarchy, Lawlessness, and Seditious

by Stephanie

These days you won't often find the words bloodshed, murder, and kill used in anarchist pamphlets, even if the language of class war is still commonplace, at least here in North America. However, there are still groups today who don't shy away from violent rhetoric, like Individualidades Tendiendo a lo Salvaje (Individualists Tending Towards the Wild, ITS), which is formed by "nihilist saboteurs, incendiary nomads, individualist delinquents, terrorist anarchists, politically and morally incorrect critics." Openly, many anarchists don't want to be associated with this type of political violence, even if they vocally support militant antagonism with state forces. It runs counter to their vision of anarchism as a movement of "the people" where the divide between the good and bad, comrade and enemy, proletarian and capitalist is clear. Perhaps this is why Haymarket is remembered and celebrated, while few people in the Bay Area know or talk about the Preparedness Day bombing, even though it happened locally and was of a similar magnitude in the press. The aim in recalling this local history is not to judge the value of these types of actions, to praise or condemn the gory act, but simply to question what and who we choose to remember of our anarchist forebears. Let's go back to San Francisco, 1916, when anarchists were an international threat to social order, at the height of conflict between labor and capital.

Alongside the battles for higher wages and the right to unionize, WWI had engulfed Europe and workers were fighting bitterly to stop military conscription and against a capitalist war that would only benefit world powers intent on oppressing and exploiting the working class. A "Preparedness" movement arose in the US that would demand military intervention in Europe, but closer to home it was the Mexican Revolution that struck fear in peoples hearts. Pancho Villa had sacked the town of Columbus, N.M., killing 17 Americans. William Randolph Hearst's papers, including The San Francisco Examiner, demanded that the U.S. invade and annex Mexico and "civilize its mongrel mixture of Aztec, Indian and Spanish buccaneer" people. Woodrow Wilson, previously an isolationist, would become a proponent of war following this national outrage, and on June 3rd would enact the National Defense Act of 1916 expanding the Army by 175,000 men and the National Guard by 450,000. This, among other events like the sinking of the Lusitania in May of 1915, caused preparedness to become a national theme "per-

even threw a man's hat and a severed ear atop a nearby building." Despite the carnage and panic the "infernal machine" caused, the parade continued for another 3 1/2 hours, all while limbs were picked up, bodies carried off, blood washed away, and witnesses interviewed who described a pair of "dark skinned men, probably Mexicans."

Learning of the explosion while out at lunch with friends, Emma Goldman mentions barely escaping the repercussions of the attack in her autobiography *Living My Life*. She goes on to bemoan the cowardly response on the part of those who would normally be supportive of the anti-preparedness movement and says, "It was an open secret in San Francisco that the police and the newspapers had been warned that something violent might happen if the Chamber of Commerce kept insisting on the public demonstration of its mailed fist. Yet the 'patriots' had permitted the parade to take place deliberately exposing the participants to danger. The indifference to human life on the part of those who had staged the spectacle gave a foretaste of how cheaply life would be considered should America enter the war." "Shadow every anarchist in town." The response to the destruction was predictable; the newspapers called for blood and decried the bombing as an outrage and a tragedy. Hearst even had a silent film animated warning citizens of "San Francisco's Future of Anarchy, Lawlessness, and Seditious." The offices of *The Blast* were raided twice and Alexander Berkman would leave a tense San Francisco for New York soon after. "San Francisco must now prove to the world that it is ready...to root out forever the criminal element as well as the

responsible agitators, who, preaching class hatred, have caused criminal minds to commit this outrage," said the head of the city's Civic League of Improvement Clubs. Articles called for ridding the city of "anarchists." As each suspect was arrested, their faces appeared on *The Examiner's* front cover. One was simply called a "dynamiter," another an "agitator." Anyone and everyone linked to radical politics or labor unionism was rounded up as a possible suspect. A Finnish sailor was arrested for reportedly saying, "Well, that is what comes of preparedness." Another man, a

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Galleanisti flier accompanying
June bombings, 1919

member of the IWW, was arrested in Fresno for voicing similar sentiments.

It is no surprise that two militant trade-unionists, Thomas Mooney and Warren Billings, ended up being charged with the crime soon after, given their successful labor agitation. They became a cause célèbre among

the Preparedness Day bombing, even though it happened locally and was of a similar magnitude in the press. The aim in recalling this local history is not to judge the value of these types of actions, to praise or condemn the gory act, but simply to question what and who we choose to remember of our anarchist forebears. Let's go back to San Francisco, 1916, when anarchists were an international threat to social order, at the height of conflict between labor and capital.

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Arriving on the heels of the bombing of *The Los Angeles Times* for its anti-union editorializing, the threat came at a time when conflict between business leaders and striking unionists was at a boiling point. Two strikers and 38 scabs were hospitalized in violent clashes between June 9 and July 17, 1916 and on June 22 San Francisco's Chamber of Commerce publicly endorsed the "open shop" rule, barring unions from organizing local workers. Shortly after on July 10, over 2,000 businessmen spent a million dollars to create a Chamber of Commerce Law and Order Committee, whose primary goal was to rid San Francisco of "anarchist elements" by any means available. Meanwhile, the papers announced that "San Francisco will shout a full-throated salute during the preparedness parade when the second bomb is fired [presumably a firecracker], which will be the signal for the bands to play the 'Star-Spangled Banner'. When this signal is given every whistle in the city will open its salve and shriek patriotically." Also making an appearance was the "Goddess of Preparedness", vaudeville performer Claire

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member of the IWW, was arrested in Fresno for voicing similar sentiments.

It is no surprise that two militant trade-unionists, Thomas Mooney and Warren Billings, ended up being charged with the crime soon after, given their successful labor agitation. They became a cause célèbre among labor activists and a decades-long fight ensued that ended with them being released in 1939. Although they were declared to be anarchists at the time, Mooney and Billings were Socialists and opposed anarchy, a point made clearly by their defense attorney William Cockran when he addressed a public mass meeting on March 25th, 1917: "So far from being anxious to destroy life, the anarchist professes to hold it so sacred that he does not concede the right of any human agency to take or destroy it. True, some men who committed crimes that have startled the world claimed to be anarchists, and to have perpetrated their awful deeds as a means of spreading anarchism. But these men, anarchists insist, were lunatics not anarchists; demented creatures whose mental infirmity was indicated by such insane efforts to promote respect for anarchy by acts that violated its fundamental ideas."

The true identity of the bomber, or bombers, remains a mystery and theories abound as to their identity, but the most convincing is that it was the Galleanisti, an informal network of Italian anarchists who were uncompromising believers in propaganda of the deed and adherents of Luigi Galleani, who created and edited the paper *Cronaca Sovversiva* (Subversive Chronicle), which at one point boasted a subscription of 5,000 and which Sacco and Vanzetti spoke of on a number of occasions. "Its influence, reaching far beyond the confines of the US, could be felt wherever Italian radicals congregated, from Europe and North Africa to South America and Australia." The paper would often list personal information of businessmen, strikebreakers, and other enemies. While Galleani was openly critical of Socialists, he could often be seen giving fiery speeches to workers urging them to cast off their chains, and would raise money for jailed strikers.

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"The Air was Filled with Death-Dealing Metal"

The massive parade consisting of 52 bands and 51,239 people representing 2,134 organizations set off to the joy of the enthusiastic and patriotic throng of spectators, around 100,000 of them, and the chagrin of protesting IWW members. Outside the Ferry Exchange Saloon at Stuart and Market Streets, the sidewalks were packed with patriotic men, women, and children. Several onlookers watched as a man in dark, worn clothing and a soft black hat left a black suitcase on the sidewalk against a wall. Seeing this, one man leaving the saloon warned him that if he left it there it might be stolen. "Don't touch that suitcase...I know what I'm doing," the man in black replied tersely as he walked away. Today, with a heightened fear of terrorism, this would have set off alarms and after clearing a huge radius, a bomb-disabling robot would be called in. But in 1916, the black suitcase sat alone for 30 minutes before announcing itself with a bang at 2:06pm.

The blast "tore through the ranks of the parade, its metal-packed heart shattering windows and ripping through bodies in a wide arch of mayhem that littered lower Market Street. It knocked policemen off their horses and

Mooney and Billings were Socialists and opposed anarchy, a point made clearly by their defense attorney William Cockran when he addressed a public mass meeting on March 25th, 1917: "So far from being anxious to destroy life, the anarchist professes to hold it so sacred that he does not concede the right of any human agency to take or destroy it. True, some men who committed crimes that have startled the world claimed to be anarchists, and to have perpetrated their awful deeds as a means of spreading anarchism. But these men, anarchists insist, were lunatics not anarchists; demented creatures whose mental infirmity was indicated by such insane efforts to promote respect for anarchy by acts that violated its fundamental ideas."

The true identity of the bomber, or bombers, remains a mystery and theories abound as to their identity, but the most convincing is that it was the Galleanisti, an informal network of Italian anarchists who were uncompromising believers in propaganda of the deed and adherents of Luigi Galleani, who created and edited the paper *Cronaca Sovversiva* (Subversive Chronicle), which at one point boasted a subscription of 5,000 and which Sacco and Vanzetti spoke of on a number of occasions. "Its influence, reaching far beyond the confines of the US, could be felt wherever Italian radicals congregated, from Europe and North Africa to South America and Australia." The paper would often list personal information of businessmen, strikebreakers, and other enemies. While Galleani was openly critical of Socialists, he could often be seen giving fiery speeches to workers urging them to cast off their chains, and would raise money for jailed strikers.

The people who are pushing all this garbage and development and technological progress should be severely punished.

- F, from the First Communique from ITS

The Preparedness Day bombing raises some important questions and considerations for anarchists. When we identify with the bombings of the Galleanisti or the assassinations of ITS Grupúsculo "Matar o Morir" ("Kill or Die" Groupuscule), are we prepared for the backlash that ultimately follows political terrorism? Goldman, Berkman, and others accused of instigating the murder of innocents were deported, while today stories emerge of people entrapped by the FBI and thrown in jail for plots that never actually materialize. Will anarchists embrace and own the shadowy bomb throwing caricature that has been bestowed upon us by our enemies? Grupúsculo "Matar o Morir" has embraced this legacy with modern imagery that invokes images of terrorist groups in the Middle East with hoodies covering their faces while they show off their firearms, their ammo and weapons on display in front of them, their flag behind them. In 1916, a bomber chose to make a horrific spectacle out of a public event, a politically significant one at that. Can anarchists still support "propaganda by the deed" when it involves people who are less clearly foes? Are we prepared?

BEYOND ONE PARTICULAR BURST OF ANGER

Interview on #BLM and the African People's Caucus

by Dominique
"Almost" Browne

Q Can you start off by telling me a little bit about your story, how you got involved with the IWW and the African People's Caucus?

Sure, my name is Dee. I first got involved in activism through Occupy Wall Street. I was able to get introduced to people in the IWW who were very concerned with taking the energy behind that and turning it into a general strike. I started working at UPS, a place with extremely low pay part-time work and extremely hard jobs at the same time. In the midst of that it became clear to me that these were terrible working conditions. I wasn't the only one pissed off. The union that was in there at the time wasn't doing anything about the situation. People belonged to a union because you had to sign on to a union to get the job. So, I knew I couldn't count on the Teamsters. Solidarity unionism is all about building workers power from the bottom up—instead of the top down. We started organizing workers on the job floor which culminated in an action called "Hands up, Don't Ship"

Q This emerged from Minneapolis?

Yes, that was out of Minneapolis, but it was something that caught national attention. It was in solidarity with the uprising in Ferguson. At my job we were shipping target dummies to police agencies. Law enforcement targets that get shipped everywhere, but one of the places they ship to was St. Louis near where the uprising was happening at the time. Seeing the direct connection that workers had transporting these targets to help kill more people motivated us to do something about it. That's how "hands up, don't ship" got started. I think the fundamental break I had to make with

but it is limited because their solution is black empowerment that includes celebrating people like Beyonce or Jay-Z as the highest standard of black excellence. Not realizing that these particular figures also play into capitalism which also relates to systemic racism. As a result, they were content with continuing capitalism so long as black people are at the top. Everyone can't be a famous rapper or a basketball player. Everyone can't be that because capitalism prevents it, because it depends on that concentration of wealth. It needs that in order to survive; therefore it needs people to be poor. It requires that poverty exists. Yes, cultural identity and empowerment are important, but let's not forget about how that relates to economic exploitation. Let's not forget about capitalism, how that separates and exploits our people as well.

Q I would like to hear more about the African Peoples caucus. I heard that your group witnessed something called "peace policing" at anti-police brutality protests. Was this a reigning in of sorts?

Absolutely. The "peace police" were people who were mostly affiliated with #BlackLivesMatter (BLM). They were not the only organization of the shut down. There were a multitude of groups including the IWW. Most of the "peace police" were unfortunately young black folk, working on behalf of or in concert with BLM, who did not understand who the radical elements were and saw them as dangerous provocateurs and accused them of trying to hijack or destroy the movement, accusations that are very poisonous. They isolate the militant folks from the "more peaceful," non-violent, respectable black folks. Make them the face of the movement. Certainly, BLM and the NAACP were encouraging this kind of thought

and made it their own. It's not as easy to write off, when the idea of fighting back appeals to people.

Exactly, they couldn't do that anymore, they couldn't just label people based on ideology, with folks like us around. We were here and we support these people. And if you are "peace policing," you're wrong, because not only does it insult us, but it's not proper security culture. In the 60s federal agents fighting radical and peaceful civil rights organizations would tell people "I heard they are a snitch." They would encourage a culture of paranoia. With so many unknown people showing up, I mean it can be a suspicious thing. It's not easy to deal with, but as people became more familiar with each other, working with each other, that sort of thing started to dissipate more and more. The precinct itself is still there, but it will never be the same after that. People have recognized that this institution does not protect us.

Q Can you talk about the background of these struggles. A lot of intense events happened in Minneapolis.

Jamar Clark was a young man who got killed in the predominantly black neighborhood of north Minneapolis. The reason this was such a flash-point is because he was unarmed, handcuffed, and kneeling—so he was shot execution style. Oscar Grant on the west coast was the same situation. A very similar response happened here. The 4th Precinct was chosen as a spot to occupy because it's always had a notorious reputation in the community. There was a lot of dancing in the streets. Almost a celebratory atmosphere. Which was a bit controversial because the family members were grieving and people were partying during this tragedy. Regardless, it was festive. The entire pre-

work and extremely hard jobs at the same time. In the midst of that it became clear to me that these were terrible working conditions. I wasn't the only one pissed off. The union that was in there at the time wasn't doing anything about the situation. People belonged to a union because you had to sign on to a union to get the job. So, I knew I couldn't count on the Teamsters. Solidarity unionism is all about building workers power from the bottom up—instead of the top down. We started organizing workers on the job floor which culminated in an action called "Hands up, Don't Ship"

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Q *You were able to find personal connections to St. Louis. You see that race is important, but you are also inspired by labor organizing. Are there points where you find yourself dealing with people from the black community who are reformist or perhaps non-black radicals that don't get where you're coming from?*

Always. One thing I love about the IWW here is that most of them understand the relationship of racism and the exploitation of labor. Most of them have a great class analysis, but they also have a great understanding of systemic racism, even

and concentration of wealth. It needs that in order to survive; therefore it needs people to be poor. It requires that poverty exists. Yes, cultural identity and empowerment are important, but let's not forget about how that relates to economic exploitation. Let's not forget about capitalism, how that separates and exploits our people as well.

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Q *How do you respond when you aren't this outside agitator caricature, how do you feel when that's happening?*

I feel disrespected, because I am an anarchist. I am from that community. I've lived there for years. I have family members from that neighborhood. Most of the people doing the militant activity weren't anarchists: they were kids from the community. It's the typical strategy they constantly use, because they are afraid of real change. They are only really interested in changing the face of oppression. One of the things that impressed me about the rebellion was people fighting the police in the streets. A lot of these people came out of nowhere and became radical overnight. I remember having a conversation while

rights organizations would tell people "I heard they are a snitch." They would encourage a culture of paranoia. With so many unknown people showing up, I mean it can be a suspicious thing. It's not easy to deal with, but as people became more familiar with each other, working with each other, that sort of thing started to dissipate more and more. The precinct itself is still there, but it will never be the same after that. People have recognized that this institution does not protect us.

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Q *Why did the African Peoples Caucus form, are there any similar projects?*

In the Caucus we work to bring more black people in, because a white person could be the most intelligent, capable organizer ever, but if certain people don't hear that coming from a black voice they will give it less credit. I think the same thing applies to rural areas. If I went out there like a city slicker from the 'hood talking about wage slavery and all that typical shit they probably would not listen to what I had to say simply because of my

day it was really no different than what the US was doing. It was essentially state capitalism with the same exploitative forms. It was the same system of divisions, where you have a ruling class and you have the working class except the ruling class just goes by a new name. I started studying anarchism and realized I agreed with some of the most basic tenets. I didn't really get active until Occupy gave me the chance to experience and practice those ideas

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Always. One thing I love about the IWW here is that most of them understand the relationship of racism and the exploitation of labor. Most of them have a great class analysis, but they also have a great understanding of systemic racism, even though most of them are involved in strictly the former, fighting class oppression. That was one of the reasons why I chose to get involved with them. But, absolutely, I do run into those conflicts all the time. A childhood friend of mine was one of the only dudes who could see where I was coming from politically, but his family was connected with the Nation of Islam, a controversial religious group that has a lot of analysis about racism, but when it comes to solutions, when it comes to class division and exploitation not just of black people but also of white people, Asians and immigrants they are much weaker. Some of the analysis is quite frankly racist. Black supremacist, if you will. In the wake of what's happened, in the Ferguson/anti-police brutality movement you also get another wing of people who are saying that black people are oppressed on a cultural level. Our culture has been destroyed and suppressed by white people. Our hair is a mess. Our skin is inferior, everything about us is inferior. So, we have to bring our culture back by celebrating blackness. Which, I don't morally disagree with,

...that kind of labeling. When it came to black anarchists, there was very little they could do, because their whole argument was that "these are white people from outside of the community who are just trying to stir up trouble!"

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Q *When police use the trope of Outside White Agitator, it sounds like they are using it to discredit people who aren't white, but people picked up that flag*

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Q *Anti-black violence seems to create an impossible circumstance for daily life, but then you get these moments where people feel that they can be triumphant. How do we get to the point where black people not getting killed doesn't seem like a Utopian ideal. What does it feel like to be in this impossible situation?*

I'm not going to lie, it feels daunting. It feels hard at times, but not impossible, because I know what's possible now. How do we sustain this beyond one particular burst of anger?

A Rojava Primer and Glossary

You might have heard that there are interesting things happening in Rojava. You might know that Rojava is an area in Syria. You might have heard that there are anarchists who are very excited about it. You might have gone to a presentation or two, and perhaps become hopelessly muddled by the series of acronyms and initials, areas, and individuals, that are only part of what is relevant to know about the area and current events.

When people come back from visiting the area, talking about how this is this century's Spanish Civil War or—alternately—Chiapas, in its significance for armed experiments in anarchy and/or anti-authoritarianism, it seems appropriate to establish a foundation to understand what is going on.

So consider this the start of a primer and glossary to understanding a bit of the context, and as background for some of the articles and presentations by people who have visited or lived in the area. We of course welcome corrections and additions for future issues.

Abdullah Öcalan (pronounced Ojalan) – Founder of the PKK while a student in 1978.

Since his incarceration (he was originally sentenced to death but when Turkey ended the death penalty so that they could enter the UN, his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment), Öcalan has significantly changed his thinking, reading Western social theorists (e.g. Murray Bookchin, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Immanuel Wallerstein, Fernand Braudel), fashioned his ideal society as “Democratic Confederalism” (drawing heavily on Bookchin’s Communalism) and refers to Nietzsche as “a prophet.” He also wrote books and articles on the history of pre-capitalist Mesopotamia, among other things. About Demo-

in confederal councils

DBK – *Kurdish Supreme Committee*, governing body of Rojava, founded by the PYD and the KNC.

HDP – *the People’s Democratic Party*, a pro-Kurdish electoral party, the strength of which in a given region is used by some as an indicator of that region’s support for the PKK.

HPG – *the Kurdish People’s Defence Force*, the armed wing of the PKK

KCK – *United Kurdish Community*: an umbrella organization of Kurds from Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria

KDP/PDK – *Kurdistan Democratic Party*, one of the main Kurdish parties in Iraqi Kurdistan, claims a broad ideological base, from tribal conservatives to socialists; regarded as populist and nationalist

KNC – *Kurdish National Council*, a Syrian political organization supportive of Kurdish autonomy. The PYD joined the KNC to create the Kurdish Supreme Committee to defend Syrian Kurdistan. There continues to be disagreements between PYD and the KNC (for example: allegations from the KNC that the PYD only allows buildings to fly the Rojava flag, which they are able to enforce since the PYD ensures, sometime forcibly, that no other groups have any significant armed wing like the YPG).

KRG – *the Kurdistan Regional Government* was initiated by the Bush administration to get oil without having to deal with the Iraqi government. This body is not sympathetic to the conflict in Rojava or the PKK, but is Kurd-friendly.

PKK – *the Kurdistan Workers’ Party*, usually also

known as the Rojava Conflict or the Rojava Revolution.

YPG – *People’s Protection (or Defence) Units*: the main armed service of the Kurdish Supreme Committee of Rojava, the primary role of which is to defend. Practically unknown till it joined the Syrian Civil War in 2011, in the early days attacks by Islamists enabled the YPG to unite most of the Syrian Kurds. Later on its defense against IS led to a de facto alliance between the YPG and the USA. By July 2015 the YPG had become a major force in the Syrian Civil War. Forces are primarily Kurdish, but include some Arabs, Turks, and westerners.

The YPG believes that a long term solution lies in implementing Öcalan’s ideas, which are based on participatory democracy and have ecology and feminism as pillars. The YPG is serious about being a democratic people’s army: for example, it conducts internal elections to appoint officers, and the prominent role of the YPJ. The Kurds are also implementing systems like cooperatives and highly localized democracy. The relevance of such beliefs is that the YPG might, for example, prefer spreading the revolution to other areas rather than conquering them.

Since the military forces of a resistance can be where emerging states get their muscle, it is worth noting the militia’s structure. Teams have 6 – 10 fighters; suites are made of two teams with 12 – 20 fighters; blocks are two suites, 24 – 40 fighters, and companies are two blocks, and have 48 – 80 fighters.

There are no officers. When engaged in operations, the fighters choose (by vote or consensus) Team, Suite, Block, and Company Leaders. When idle, there is no leadership structure at any level, save Regional Commands. Command-

appropriate to establish a foundation to understand what is going on.

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Since his incarceration (he was originally sentenced to death but when Turkey ended the death penalty so that they could enter the UN, his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment), Öcalan has significantly changed his thinking, reading Western social theorists (e.g. Murray Bookchin, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Immanuel Wallerstein, Fernand Braudel), fashioned his ideal society as “Democratic Confederalism” (drawing heavily on Bookchin’s Communalism) and refers to Nietzsche as “a prophet.” He also wrote books and articles on the history of pre-capitalist Mesopotamia, among other things. About Democratic Confederalism he has said: *The democratic confederalism of Kurdistan is not a State system, it is the democratic system of a people without a State... It takes its power from the people and adapts to reach self-sufficiency in every field including the economy.* (2005)

He continues to be the theorist of the the movement, though he has been imprisoned for decades.

Kurds – are an ethnic group in the Middle East, the majority population in the autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan and in Rojava, and a significant minority in Turkey (roughly 20% of the population), Iran (roughly 10%), and Syria (roughly 9%). Kurds are culturally and linguistically close to Iranians, and often are classified as an Iranian people. Kurdish language refers to a collection of related dialects spoken by Kurds, who usually also speak the official language of their area (Arabic, Persian, and/or Turkish). As a whole, the Kurdish people are adherents to a large number of different religions and creeds, perhaps constituting the most religiously diverse people of West Asia. Traditionally, Kurds have been known to take great liberties with their practices. This sentiment is reflected in the say-

ing: “God is with the Kurds.”
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PKK – *the Kurdistan Workers’ Party*, usually also includes the HPG. Founded by Öcalan, primarily for the struggle against Turkey in the defense of Kurdish people. It is listed as a terrorist organization by NATO and the European Union, but not by the UN, India, the US, China, Russia, Switzerland, or Egypt.

In the 1970s, growth in Kurdish nationalism influenced by Marxist political thought led some new Kurdish nationalists to oppose the local feudal authorities who had been a traditional source of opposition to authority. These nationalists formed the militant separatist organization PKK, also known as the Kurdistan Workers’ Party. Influenced by Öcalan, this group eventually abandoned Marxism-Leninism.

Relations between PKK and Turkish state forces are characterized by mistrust and betrayal. One partial snapshot as example: in July 2015, Turkey finally became involved in the war against ISIL. While they were doing so, they decided to bomb PKK targets in Iraq. The bombings came a few days after PKK was suspected to have assassinated two Turkish police officers, accused by the PKK of having links with ISIS.

PYD – *Democratic Union Party*, founded in 2003

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There are no officers. When engaged in operations, the fighters choose (by vote or consensus) Team, Suite, Block, and Company Leaders. When idle, there is no leadership structure at any level, save Regional Commands. Commanders are chosen (again, by vote or consensus) for regions and cantons (Kobane, Qamishli) and can only serve six months in any given unit. They are then replaced. There is no re-election.

Training for a YPG/J fighter lasts 45 days. After training, the fighter is asked where and what type of duty s/he would like. They can opt for front-line service, tactical reserves, Turkish border patrol, internal checkpoints, or logistics and communication. The choice of duty, where to serve, and how long to serve, is solely the individual fighter’s. Leave in the YPG/J varies with unit and combat situation. When idle, single men, and most YPJ fighters (who are usually unmarried) go on leave four days a month. Married men serve one week on and one week off. When engaged in battle, leave is still offered to the fighters, but is rarely taken. One Kobane Commander joked that the seige lasted only a month because the married fighters realized that the more Daesh they killed, the sooner they would see their wives and children. Food, clothing, and shelter are provided to all YPG fighters; they also receive compensation amounting to about \$100/month. This seems small by US standards, but in Rojava it can go a long way.

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Kurds have been systematically discriminated against and oppressed by state forces in Turkey and in Syria. For example: Massacres, such as those in Dersim and Zilan, have periodically occurred against the Kurds since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. In an attempt to deny their existence, the Turkish government categorized Kurds as “Mountain Turks” until 1991, and the words “Kurds,” “Kurdistan,” and “Kurdish” were officially banned by the Turkish government.

Communalism: Bookchin’s proposal that markets and money be abolished and that private property (not necessarily including personal property) be placed increasingly in the custody of citizens in free assemblies and their delegates

of Kurdish people. It is listed as a terrorist organization by NATO and the European Union, but not by the UN, India, the US, China, Russia, Switzerland, or Egypt.

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PYD – *Democratic Union Party*, founded in 2003 as one of many Kurdish opposition parties. The PYD distinguished itself as the only Kurdish party that fully supported the Qamışlo uprising in 2004. As a result, it was brutally repressed in the years leading up to the Syrian Civil War, leading to its very weak position at the start of that war. It considers Öcalan to be its ideological leader, and claims a close relationship to and ideological affinity with the PKK.

Rojava means “the West,” and names an area in northern Syria. It is west of the Tigris River, which flows along Syria’s border with Turkey. There are three regions, or cantons, in Rojava, one of them borders Iraqi Kurdistan to the southeast. Most other borders are contested. Most of Rojava is flat—only Afrin canton has mountainous country (the Kurd mountains).

Rojava gained autonomy in 2013 in what is

only serve six months in any given unit. They are then replaced. There is no re-election.

Training for a YPG/J fighter lasts 45 days. After training, the fighter is asked where and what type of duty s/he would like. They can opt for front-line service, tactical reserves, Turkish border patrol, internal checkpoints, or logistics and communication. The choice of duty, where to serve, and how long to serve, is solely the individual fighter’s. Leave in the YPG/J varies with unit and combat situation. When idle, single men, and most YPJ fighters (who are usually unmarried) go on leave four days a month. Married men serve one week on and one week off. When engaged in battle, leave is still offered to the fighters, but is rarely taken. One Kobane Commander joked that the siege lasted only a month because the married fighters realized that the more Daesh they killed, the sooner they would see their wives and children. Food, clothing, and shelter are provided to all YPG fighters; they also receive compensation amounting to about \$100/month. This seems small by US standards, but in Rojava it can go a long way.

YPJ – *Women’s Protection (or Defence) Units*; the women’s brigades of the YPG. They were essential during the siege of Kobani, and continue to be an indication of the feminism of the insurgency’s vision.

Some Good Sources of Information, in No Order

<http://www.bakurfilm.com/en/index.html>

<https://roarmag.org/essays/rojava-autonomy-syrian-kurds/>

www.zaherbaheer.com

<https://archive.org/details/rojavatalk>

<http://www.blackrosefed.org/kurdish-resistance-against-the-curfews-in-bakur-an-overview-and-an-anarchist-message/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_38eVyMfag0

<https://archive.org/details/rojavatalk>

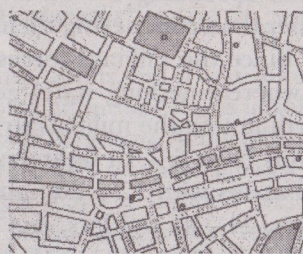
<http://anarchistnews.org/tags/el-errante>

Dispatches

Introduction

The premiere of an anarchist periodical is an inauspicious event. Anarchist publications, especially periodicals have a tendency to redefine new, ever expanding boundaries of cultural and social obscurity. In addition, anarchist journals tend to die young; many succumbing within the first year or two. Not that these two statements should stop anyone ever from taking up the pen; rather they function as simple statements of fact. If anything, for those of us engaged in writing and publishing they aren't obstacles to be overcome, they are constant reminders of the strength of the shared enemy. Which pisses me off just enough to commit to writing for this journal.

Instead of an introduction, I am an anarchist and a writer. I helped operate the Anarchist Switchboard on the Lower East Side, rioted in the Tompkins Square Park event of 1988, and have edited and written for various anarchist zines and journals, including *Black Eye*, *Anarchy* magazine, and *Modern Slavery*. My most recent getaway was a visit to the Kurdish Autonomous Zone in Northern Syria known as Rojava.



Symbiogenesis:

A Suburban Armchair Nihilist on a Quest to Touch the Real

Introduction:

My earliest memory of anarchist sentiments was when, around the age of five, the woods near my desolate Midwestern suburb were clear-cut. Days before, I had passed the afternoon lifting up rocks and gazing with rapture at earthworms, centipedes, and spiders. On seeing that fragment of a forest's sudden annihilation, I recall running home crying, later hearing from my father one of the few reasonable things he ever said to me as far as value theory goes: "What they did was wrong". About thirteen years later, I discovered at almost the same time two wonderful and dubious words for my latent ideas: anarchism and permaculture. The two have been linked for me ever since.

Over the next several years of reflection, discussion, and practice, I came to recognize my disagreement and embarrassment with most who espoused the values of those two terms and the corresponding impoverishment of a life lived by those understandings. With neurotic exactitude, I learned all of the adjectives, hyphens, and caveats necessary to better express my views. But, much more than that, I came to appreciate what a vivacious, self-created life might really look like. A life of rich ecology – where the human could exist in mutualism with the non-human – demands a union of autonomous humans capable of realizing their individual desires collectively; and, in an especially lovely case of a dialectic, realizing a world of anarchist humans practicing forest gardening and foraging is the surest way (short of human extinction) to halt mass ecocide and bring about a new organic richness.

Through a bit of tenacity floating on a deluge of luck, I am presently beginning an overdue

Capitalism Blows

Anarchy, Sex Work, and the Grey Economy

Introduction

Sex work is a topic that exists in an on-going and unusual space between illegal and accepted, established and precarious, alienating, objectifying and empowering. It is both sex and work, not in some static formula, but a mix that varies from minute to minute, john to john, worker to worker. It is a combination of acceptance of and denial of the status quo, it reflects normal roles and also reverses them, has the capacity for resistance and acquiescence in the same act at the same time... Sex work makes all the conflicts and confusions about sex (and many about work) bigger and more obvious. The titillation that is too often a part of talking about it, and that makes it distasteful for many (sometimes especially for sex workers) to engage these questions, is part of that conflict, not outside of it.

Sex work, of course, even at its best, is also work. It requires all the objectification (and usually more) of any other job: but because there is such a tremendous breadth within the category, it's challenging to make sweeping generalizations about it. And given that ideologues have been using sex work as a tool for their agendas for hundreds of years, generalizations also come with enough baggage to send even thoughtful folks running.



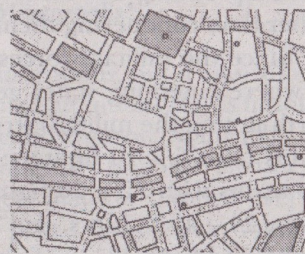
and social obscurity. In addition, anarchist journals tend to die young; many succumbing within the first year or two. Not that these two statements should stop anyone ever from taking up the pen; rather they function as simple statements of fact. If anything, for those of us engaged in writing and publishing they aren't obstacles to be overcome, they are constant reminders of the strength of the shared enemy. Which pisses me off just enough to commit to writing for this journal.

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One can feel the times changing. As society decomposes exquisitely in front of our eyes, it's easy to imagine new growth blossoming from the carcass. And how this rebirth will occur, and what it will look like are questions that we may now ask, in all seriousness. It is with this in mind that I decided to write for *The Blast*, knowing full well that the current zeitgeist appears to be a shuddered calm before the storm. And it is my experience of these times, with all the blather and tangents left intact, that I intend to populate this column with.

I have also been able to secure, at least for now, the time to do some travelling. I hope to use what I learn and see on the road to provide some grist for the mill of this column. I think it only fair to add that while not exactly the journalism taught in school, I hope my reporting will give a sense of time and place, as well as the sights, sounds, smell and feel of the locations that I wander through.

Carlo Pisacane, an Italian anarchist wrote, "ideals spring from deeds and not the other way around." While not in complete agreement with the statement, I do believe that now is the time



"about wrong". About fifteen years later, I discovered at almost the same time two wonderful and dubious words for my latent ideas: anarchism and permaculture. The two have been linked for me ever since.

Over the next several years of reflection, discussion, and practice, I came to recognize my disagreement and embarrassment with most who espoused the values of those two terms and the corresponding impoverishment of a life lived by those understandings. With neurotic exactitude, I learned all of the adjectives, hyphens, and caveats necessary to better express my views. But, much more than that, I came to appreciate what a vivacious, self-created life might really look like. A life of rich ecology – where the human could exist in mutualism with the non-human – demands a union of autonomous humans capable of realizing their individual desires collectively; and, in an especially lovely case of a dialectic, realizing a world of anarchist humans practicing forest gardening and foraging is the surest way (short of human extinction) to halt mass ecocide and bring about a new organic richness.

Through a bit of tenacity floating on a deluge of luck, I am presently beginning an overdue practice: with a group of friends, I am initiating an effort at forming an anarchist forest gardening project in the northeast of the US. The project is aimed at self-sufficiency and qualitative transformation for those involved as much as it is aimed at sharing the skills and propagating the ideas that support it. From an egoist ecological perspective, one becomes more liberated by liberating those around them, and the restoration of habitat for humans and nonhumans is an act that transcends common dichotomies of praxis: the individualist/collectivist, nihilist/revolutionist, immediatist/organizationalist, anthropocentrist/green, and catastrophist/actionist binaries.

We are pessimistic dreamers, without the fantasy that one can *touch the Real* simply by dragging a mind mutilated by ideology since birth into the woods for a few years. Similarly, we are not attempting to achieve the impossible task of being outside Leviathan; the very act of participation in media is an obvious testament to that fact. But these contradictions, complications, and limits are part of what makes an anarchist life tragically interesting.

This column

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But sexwork is common among anarchists for a reason. As for many other folks who have been resistant (and/or unable) to fit into the mold of normal society, it has appealing characteristics: a low bar to entry, a flexible schedule, and the capacity to work without a boss, without papers, without taxes, etc. And like many jobs available to people who like those characteristics, it can be hard to move out of that kind of work (which requires skills, but mostly skills that are not acknowledged as valuable). This makes it similar to being a mother, or a nanny—another job that many anarchists have been going for. And all these examples are gendered, emphasizing abilities that are understood as feminine (listening, being compassionate, being agreeable and pleasant, being deceitful, etc.) even though there are of course all kinds of sexes involved in all of them.

So this column is a forum for past and present anarchist sex workers to talk about their experiences and thoughts on these topics: work in the grey economy, how sex work has been troubling and empowering, how anarchist thinking

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Carlo Pisacane, an Italian anarchist wrote, "ideals spring from deeds and not the other way around." While not in complete agreement with the statement, I do believe that now is the time for action, of all kinds. Whether it is building communes, militant street action, outright insurrection, or simply being there for someone—these deeds interest me greatly. I find myself in agreement with many in the milieu who think the era of sectarian friction is ending. A great deal of time and energy has been expended for worthless results; for too long the enemy has been each other. And it is my conviction that recognizing and refusing to engage in these internecine battles is part and parcel of recognizing and refusing the artifacts of a dying civilization. If correct, I look forward to chronicling the unraveling of society, and the movement towards an anarchist future. If wrong, fuck it—I'll stay for the fun.

EL ERRANTE

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This column will feature reflections on these themes, including conversations with others doing similar projects, the potentials and pitfalls of anarchist secessionism or insurrectionary subsistence as praxis, ecocide and climate change, what a non-anthropocentric and non-reified relationship to the non-human might be, and more. As always, what is most interesting is the possibility for dialogue with readers.

BELLAMY



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So this column is a forum for past and present anarchist sex workers to talk about their experiences and thoughts on these topics: work in the grey economy, how sex work has been troubling and empowering, how anarchist thinking has informed their sex work or not, how sex work has influenced their understanding of gender, sex, work, and perhaps anarchism, as well as more general questions: like the reality that work invades more and more of our lives in a way that reflects sex work: workers are required to have social media pages with personas that are boss/customer friendly, workers are always supposed to be selling themselves as well as products, and so on.

We also hope that this column provides space for anarchists in general to start (or continue) conversations about our relationship to work and our bodies, gender, and how to confront how capitalism touches us.

DOT MATRIX

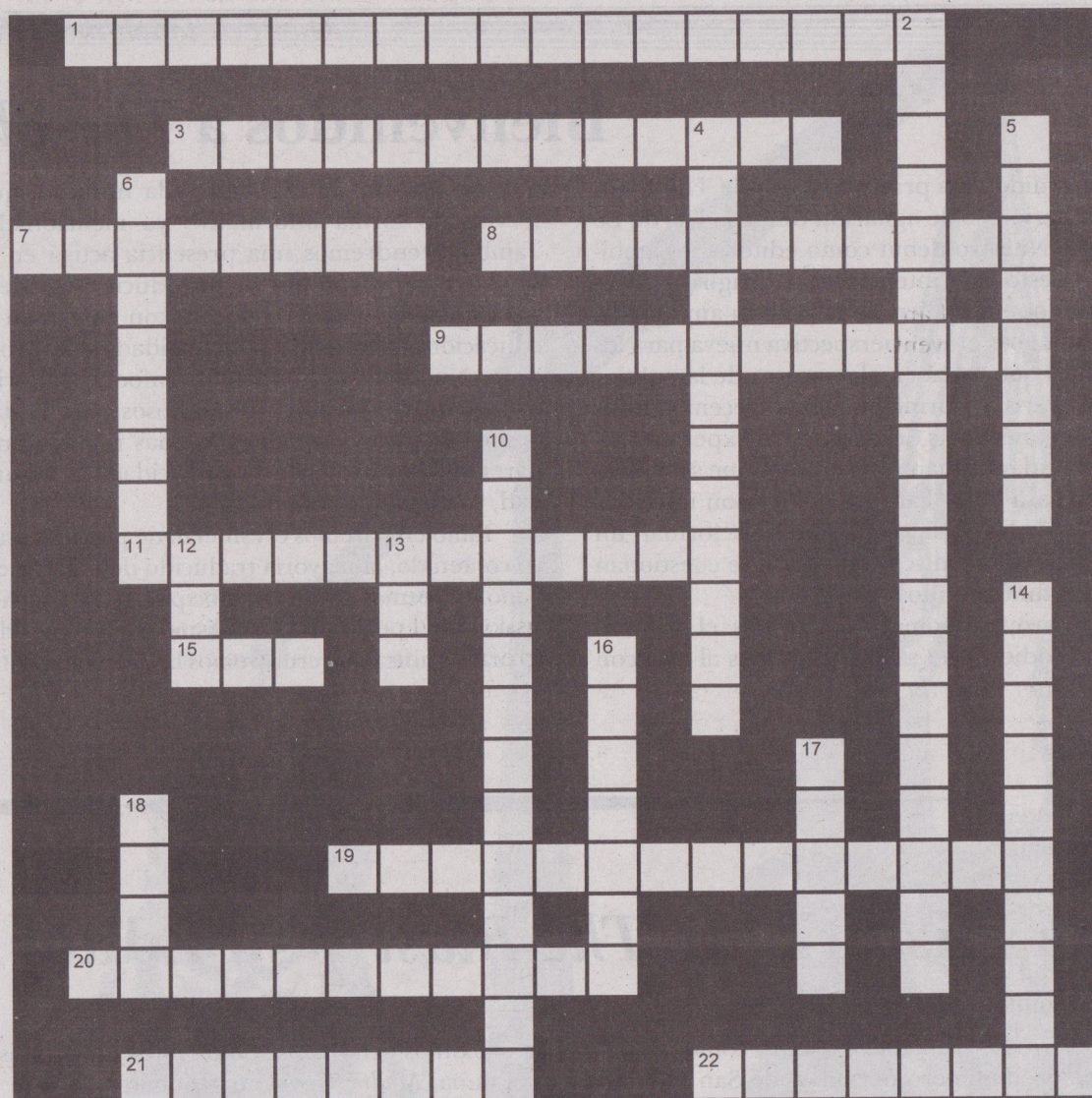
A CHALLENGING PUZZLE on the PREPAREDNESS DAY BOMBING

ACROSS

- 1, they were the scapegoats, imprisoned until 1939
3. the location of the explosion
7. the icon of bombs, also a book about historical resistance by Louis Adamic
8. liberals blame all violence on this person
9. the city everyone thinks of when you say "Northern California"
11. perhaps the most misunderstood of the original anarchist principles
15. Preparedness Day was part of ramping up for the US to enter into this
19. partners in the bombing attempt at SF Sts Peter and Paul Catholic Church; they both died without talking
20. the group of people inspired by a famous Italian
21. these pieces make bombs more destructive
22. this bike is a _____ (punks will get it)

DOWN

2. Galleani's journal (in English)
4. the perspective that a nations' best interests are best served by staying out of the affairs of other countries
5. the prisoners were finally _____
6. the most intriguing kind of mystery
10. one of the many weaknesses in the trial, for those who expect the state to follow its own rules
12. wobblies
13. the number killed
14. the belief or desire that a country should maintain strong military capability and be prepared to aggressively defend or promote national interests
16. like sports, the professional ones are full of commercialism, the informal ones can be great
17. the number wounded



answers at theblast.info/crosswords

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 16. like sports, the professional ones are full of commercialism, the informal ones can be great
 17. the number wounded
 18. historians think he was one of the more likely suspects

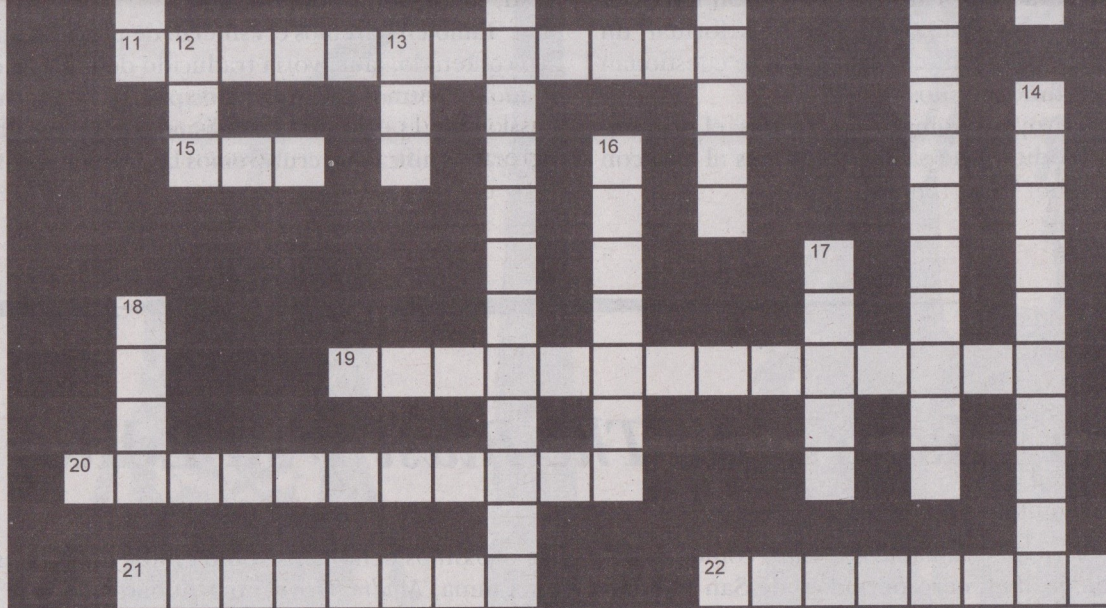
CLASSIFIEDS

Now accepting submissions of anarchist comics and/or art, especially pieces detourning politics and images from the early 1900s.

Must be capable of reproduction on newsprint.

Contact info@theblast.info for specs.

Letters to the editor may be sent to info@theblast.info, for possible publication and response, either in this publication or on our website:
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RECIPES

MOLOTOV COCKTAIL

dry empty glass bottle with a long neck
 funnel for pouring
 tampon or cloth for wick
 skinny tool for poking wick into bottle neck (the wick should be thick enough to keep liquid from easily getting out)
 lighter for wick

fill bottle 4/5 with gasoline (or to base of neck)
 poke wick into bottle neck so that one end is inside the gas.

options:

add motor oil to gasoline (the mix can be 50/50), for sticking to targets and longer lasting burn

soak wick in lighter fluid or gasoline for windy situations, etc.

tie wick to outside of bottle vs. inserting it into neck (this is safer, but requires breaking the glass before the gas will ignite).

As incendiary devices, Molotov cocktails are illegal to manufacture or possess in many regions. Their use against people is typically covered under battery, actual or grievous bodily harm, manslaughter, attempted murder, and murder, depending upon their effect and upon local laws. Their use against property is usually covered under arson charges. In the US, Molotov cocktails are considered "destructive devices" and regulated by the ATF.

OVEN-COOKED WHITE RICE FOR 50

Start early, let it be the first thing you do.

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OVEN-COOKED WHITE RICE FOR 50

*Start early, let it be the first thing you do.
If rice is the only starch served then figure on 1/4 cup of dry rice per person. Use a 1:1 2/3 rice:water ratio.*

13 cups of dry white rice (Use a quality rice like Thai or Basmati.)
22 cups of water (If you start with boiling water, the rice will cook quicker.)
Preheat oven to 375.

Dissolve salt in water. Measure rice into steamer pan (or pans) and pour water over it. Cover with lid or tinfoil. Place in oven for 45 minutes. Remove from oven (but do not open pans), leave covered so rice can steam. When the rice is cooked, fluff it with a fork to let the steam out. This is an important step because the built-up steam will continue cooking the rice. Find the balance about when to fluff, not too early, not too late.

Two pans of rice measurements:

pan 1	pan 2
6 cups dry rice	7 cups of dry rice
10 cups water	12 cups water
(optional: 1 TB salt)	(optional: 1 TB salt)

Don't uncover the rice right after pulling from it from the oven, or too much steam will escape and the rice will be dry.

Founded 2016
Bay Area, California

THE BLAST

An anarchist agitational from Turtle Island

Vol. 1, 1
theblast.info
info@theblast.info

Bienvenidos a *The Blast*

Bienvenidos a la primer edición de *The Blast*, un periódico de agitación desde la Isla de La Tortuga. Nuestro debut como editorial es ambicioso, puesto que intentamos a dirigirnos a las personas que no saben de la política anarquista, y también ofrecer una perspectiva nueva para los militantes que ya saben algo acerca de la política radical. Para los principiantes, ofrecemos unos cuentos y anécdotas desde nuestra experiencia y desde la vida cotidiana, esperamos que sean ilustrativos para ellos. Para los que ya son iniciados en los círculos radicales, queremos formar un ambiente libre de discusión donde se cuestionan todos los fundamentos aceptados.

Este proyecto tomará dos formas: el primero es el periódico, que saldrá dos veces al año con

una circulación de diez mil cada número, que servirá de forma informativo ya mencionado. También tendremos una presencia activa en el Internet con el enfoque de introducir estas ideas a personas que no las conocen, con énfasis en la educación, asuntos de la actualidad, y la prosa clara. Nuestro sitio tendrá un enfoque editorial bien definido, los foros respetuosos para la discusión de ideas y acciones, y unas reglas transparentes que protegen la privacidad, la seguridad, y calidad de contenido.

También haremos el esfuerzo de publicar nuevo contenido, la mayoría traducido de inglés a español. Creemos que un principio de la práctica anarquista es el internacionalismo comprometido, lo cual significa que cruzaremos las fronteras entre

nosotros y nuestros amigos hispanohablantes.

En nuestra primera edición publicamos dos artículos de interés histórico: el primer artículo es acerca de una publicación desde San Francisco denominado, *The Blast*, y su editor Alexander Berkman, y el otro artículo histórico analiza el Ataque del Día de Preparación y los eventos similares en la actualidad. Tenemos una entrevista con unos organizadores del IWW en Minneapolis acerca de "Black Lives Matter" (Las vidas negras importan), un ensayo acerca de la revolución actual en Kurdistan (la denominada Revolución de Rojava), y las introducciones de tres columnas regulares del periódico. Finalmente, tenemos diversión y juegos incluyendo recetas y crucigramas.

Una Historia de *The Blast* y su Editor Alexander Berkman

Este periódico se llama *The Blast* como un homenaje al efímero periódico de San Francisco del mismo nombre que fue publicado desde 1916-1917. Aquí vamos a discutir el contexto del papel y como nos inspira hoy. Un gran parte de ese contexto implica el editor del original, Alexander Berkman, uno de los anarquistas más im-

portantes de los próximos ocho años como editor de la revista de Emma, *Madre Tierra*, una publicación que se reconoce en la actualidad por sus defensas de, por ejemplo, métodos anticonceptivos que en esa época se prohibía legalmente aun la discusión y dando voz a muchos de los que siguen siendo valiosos para nosotros, incluyendo Voltairine de Cleyre

Después de algún tiempo, Berkman se estableció en Francia, donde pasó el resto de sus días en paz relativa. Su trabajo más notable que se completó durante este periodo fue su excelente declaración de propósito *¿Qué es el anarquismo comunista?*, que se mantiene como una excelente introducción a las ideas anarquistas. Su pensamien-

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Atentat

Una de las cosas para que Berkman es mejor conocido fue su reacción a la Huelga de Homestead, una huelga que fue un gran evento de la época. El Carnegie Steel Company perdió una huelga en contra de la Asociación Unida de Trabajadores de Hierro y Acero en 1882. Después de la pérdida, la destrucción de esa unión se convirtió en una obsesión para el empleado de Andrew Carnegie, Henry Frick. Diez años después, el 29 de junio de 1892, los trabajadores fueron encerrados fuera de la Homestead Steel Works y el 6 de julio de 1892, la compañía trató de traer esquiroles en un transbordador. Una batalla de un día con armas de fuego, cañones, y dinamita se resultó, matando a varios huelguistas y Agentes de la Pinkerton.

los próximos ocho años como editor de la revista de Emma, *Madre Tierra*, una publicación que se reconoce en la actualidad por sus defensas de, por ejemplo, métodos anticonceptivos que en esa época se prohibía legalmente aun la discusión y dando voz a muchos de los que siguen siendo valiosos para nosotros, incluyendo Voltairine de Cleyre, Francisco Ferrer, Margaret Anderson, Ricardo Magón, y muchos otros pensadores y escritores importantes. El 20 de abril de 1914, la Guardia Nacional de Colorado abrieron fuego en contra de una ciudad de carpas que había sido construida para apoyar a los huelguistas de los mineros del carbón en Ludlow. Veintiséis personas murieron (once de ellos fueron niños). Este hecho inspiró a Berkman a abandonar la *Madre Tierra* y Nueva York para hacer lo que pudiera para apoyar a la guerra social. Finalmente llegó a San Francisco y anunció la publicación de *The Blast*, que se introduce como "... el gran trabajo llamando ser hecho. Para trabajar entonces, y atacar cada obstáculo en el camino de la regeneración".

Apenas seis meses después, una bomba fue detonada en San Francisco como una intervención contra las actividades preparatorias previo a la entrada de los EEUU en la Primera Guerra Mundial (el Atentado de Preparedness Day). Esa maleta bomba mató a diez y hirió cuarenta más, y fue una de varias acciones que causó intensa represión oficial contra anarquistas—especialmente en las comunidades de inmigrantes. Eventualmente, Sasha y Emma fueron detenidos como un resultado de la Ley de Exclusión Anarquista y

Después de algún tiempo, Berkman se estableció en Francia, donde pasó el resto de sus días en paz relativa. Su trabajo más notable que se completó durante este periodo fue su excelente declaración de propósito *¿Qué es el anarquismo comunista?*, que se mantiene como una excelente introducción a las ideas anarquistas. Su pensamiento e influencia siguen siendo una parte perdurable de la historia del anarquismo en los EE.UU. y una inspiración para las generaciones de anarquistas que han venido.

¿Qué es este nuevo *The Blast*?

En el espíritu de Berkman, nuestra meta es tan simple y complicado como su declaración: "para destruir el Antiguo y el Falso es el trabajo más importante." Lo que hace esto más complicado es que cien años después de la publicación original, el trabajo tiene incluso más capas de sufrir. Los maestros de la capital, el gobierno, y sus lacayos siguen siendo evidentes en todas partes, pero en los medios de comunicación, la academia, y las fuerzas armadas (especialmente la policía) son más poderosos y sofisticados que nunca.

Entonces, nuestro proyecto es convertir el proyecto negativo de hostilidad absoluta hacia el orden existente a un proyecto positivo de cómo hacer nuestro obra sin perder la buena voluntad. Esto significa que mientras que los ataques sensacionales pueden ser aplaudidos, en verdad no pueden ser vistos como eficaz. Esto significa que la clase obrera tiene que ser entendido en el contexto de ser exitosamente auto-marginado. Sig-

Unidos en 1888, llegando en la ciudad de Nueva York donde inmediatamente se juntó con el movimiento anarquista y conoció la persona que sería su amiga y amante por el resto de su vida, Emma Goldman. Berkman pasó su vida anarquista como escritor, maestro, impresor, y editor.

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Al leer los titulares de este conflicto, Alexander y Emma vieron una oportunidad para una intervención. Siguiendo el principio de la propaganda por el hecho, decidieron que el asesinato de alto perfil de Frick, matón de Carnegie y el presidente de la fábrica de Homestead, demostraría a la clase obrera que el anarquismo era no sólo justo, sino también eficaz contra el orden establecido, y esperaban que pudiera ser inspiración para un levantamiento general. Lamentablemente, el entusiasmo de Berkman era mejor que su puntería y Frick sobrevivió los balazos y los intentos de puñaladas de Berkman. Berkman pasó los siguientes catorce años preso, y durante este tiempo escribió una de las memorias la prisión anarquista más influyentes (*Memorias de un anarquista en prisión*) y un periódico prisionero (*Flores de Prisión*).

Después de su salida en 1906, Berkman pasó

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Rusia y el final de su vida

Emma y Sasha llegaron a la Unión Soviética durante la época de la gran contra-revolución. Los trabajadores fueron oprimidos bajo el comunismo de guerra y se redujeron las libertades civiles fueron considerablemente (como "amenazas a la revolución"). Como enemigos de los EE.UU., su acceso a los líderes del partido bolchevique les permitieron ver la mala gestión y la corrupción de la contra-revolución antes de que fuera evidente para los demás. Después de ver una huelga reprimida y los espantosos detalles de la matanza de Kronstadt, Goldman y Berkman huyeron a Berlín. Los libros resultantes, *Mi desilusión con Rusia* y *El mito Bolchevique*, afirmaron fuertemente que la revolución soviética no era anarquista.

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La política anarquista de la publicación original salió de (entre otras cosas) camaradería y las experiencias compartidas por un enorme población energética de los inmigrantes, sufriendo y idealista; una camaradería que ya no tenemos, para bien y para mal. Esperamos que esta iteración del periódico encontrará y expondrá nuevas bases para la acción y relaciones que son tan fuertes.

*thanks to Vilja Thistlethwaite, Rev. Dök
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